

Edward Smith

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15 May 2003

Bill Hawkes
Undersecretary
United States Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250
cool@usda.gov

Dear Under Secretary Hawks,

I am a concerned consumer writing to urge you to come up with simple, effective guidelines for the mandatory country of origin labeling program as required by the 2002 Farm Bill.

Consumers deserve more information about the food we feed to our families, and where it was produced. This is more necessary than ever food-borne diseases occur with disturbing regularity around the world.

I urge you to keep these labeling rules simple and fair by adopting the following measures. Any labeling program should place a record-keeping burden only on processors/packers and retailers, and USDA should maximize the number of foods that will be labeled. Enhancing a covered product by adding water, flavoring, salt, or other seasoning should not exclude it from the labeling requirements, nor should cooking, curing, or roasting.

Sincerely,

Edward Smith



Mr. William T. Hawks
Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Robert F. Blanton